



Public Safety Support Specialists (PS3): A Fact Sheet

Are PS3s police officers?

No. By state law, PS3s are not police officers. Under ORS 181A.355, the definition of a police officer requires a person to be employed by a law enforcement unit, full time, as a commissioner peace officer and be responsible for enforcing criminal laws.

Are PS3s certified by Oregon’s Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST)?

DPSST confirmed that based on their duties, PS3s would not meet the definition of a police officer and therefore, would not need to be certified by DPSST.

Will PS3s drive patrol vehicles?

No. PS3s will drive specially-marked vehicles. They will not be permitted to drive patrol vehicles.

What will their uniforms look like?

Their uniform includes a green polo shirts and grey pants. They will not wear badges; just the PPB logo.

Will PS3s carry firearms?

No. PS3s will carry pepper spray (as do Park Rangers)

Who will PS3s report to and where will they be assigned?

PS3s will report to their sergeant. They will be divided among the three precincts.

What training did they receive?

PS3s went through an 6 week training that consisted of 240 hours of various skills. These included: basic first aid, driving, Mental Health First Aid for Law Enforcement, law, report writing, self-defense as well as scenario-based training.

Are PS3s required to respond to calls with a sworn member?

No. PS3s can respond to calls by themselves at the direction of a sergeant. The only time a sworn member’s presence would be required is if police authority is required.

What Public Safety Support Specialists can do independently. (Note: This is not a complete list)

- Write police reports for non-emergency situations that do not require police officer authority, and do not involve potential evidence, suspects, or a crime scene.
- Respond to:
 - Vehicle break-ins with no suspect information
 - Non-injury traffic collisions to facilitate information exchange between involved parties; coordinate tow services for disabled vehicles.
 - Bicycle thefts
 - Found/lost property
 - Other thefts with no suspect information (stolen wallets, purses, other items)

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What Public Safety Support Specialists can do independently *(con't.)*

- Conduct follow-up on property crimes where there is no suspect information, either by phone or in person, with an emphasis on crime victims' rights and referrals to other City Bureaus
- Perform property board-ups in cases where a window is broken but no one entered (they could also wait for the board-up vendor to come after officers have cleared the location to make sure there are no burglars inside, which would free up an officer)
- Walking patrols, if assigned by PPB sergeants
- Community engagement functions
- Attend neighborhood meetings, community and/or public events
- Assist with inventory and maintenance of PPB-issued equipment, excluding weapons and ammunition
- Assist drivers in stalled vehicles and summon other necessary assistance; respond to pedestrians, bicyclists, and other community members in need of assistance
- Assist with temporary street closures, detours and other public service duties identified by police supervisors.
- Broadcast and receive messages via police radio and Mobile Data Terminal (MDT); maintain contact with field units; ask for assistance when appropriate due to incident type and scope
- Summon a police officer
- Deliver emergency food boxes to families in need

How Public Safety Support Specialists can assist officers

- Assist police officers in searching for missing persons such as elderly adults, medically fragile adults, or children when there is no reason to believe they are a threat to themselves or the community.
- PS3s can also help sworn officers with things that, in the past, would have required the help of another sworn officer. For example, PS3s can help inventory property seized at a search warrant, help canvas a neighborhood and collect video after a robbery or other crime.

What Public Safety Support Specialists can not do because they do not have police authority

- PS3s cannot respond to calls by themselves if police authority is required.
- Search warrant service
- Make arrests
- Carry firearms
- Civil holds such as mental health or detox holds
- Any situation involving weapons or the potential for violence
- Traffic collisions where a citation is necessary (for example when someone doesn't have insurance)
- Traffic collisions when a police investigation is required (trauma-entry injuries or traffic crimes, such as DUII or hit and run, although a PS3 could take a hit and run if the suspect is gone and there's only property damage)
- Situations requiring community caretaking functions of police, such as forcing entry to a home to do a welfare check
- Persons crimes, such as assaults, sex crimes, and child/elder abuse
- PS3s will not serve as front desk clerks. There is already a position for this and that work is protected by AFSCME.